



COLORADO

Department of Transportation

Division of Transit and Rail Safe Operating Standards and Short Term Pandemic Protocols



- After suspending service to abide with Governor Polis' Stay at Home Order, the Bustang interregional bus service was given permission to resume operations on June 28th, 2020.
- In order to safely resume service, Bustang abides by the Safe Transport Plan developed in conjunction with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) and the Office of Emergency Management (OEM).
- In addition to the Safe Transport Plan, CDOT has partnered with consulting firm HDR to create a set of protocols and guidelines for transit agencies statewide to be able to reference for their own operational safety.
- This Short Term Pandemic Protocol (STPP) outlines recommendations in ten categories, working with and acknowledging all local, state, and federal orders.



- Provides an introduction to the pandemic protocols document, including the background and purpose of the protocols, identifying both scope and structure.
- Includes a summary of the most currently available pandemic information, including spread and prevention methods.
- Outlines the impacts and requirements of the most recent state-wide health orders and how they relate to public transportation.
- Outlines how CDOT intends the protocols be used—most importantly, outlines the understanding that short of local, state, or federal order, this plan is provided as a set of recommendations. Local agencies are allowed variations, be they more or less strict than the recommendations outlined.



Decontamination and Hygiene

- Details the definitions and differences between cleaning (lowering germs by removal) and disinfecting (the killing of germs on services), and provides guidelines on both.
- Gives guidelines on high touch areas and proper products used to clean and disinfect, including utilizations of different technologies and procurement of products.
- Includes guidelines on cleaning and disinfecting after persons suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 have been in the facility or onboard a transit vehicle.
- Provides guidelines for operators and passengers for hand hygiene, including frequent hand washing, avoiding high touch surfaces, and “practicing respiratory etiquette”—covering coughs and sneezes.



Personal Protective Equipment

- Provides guidelines for determining proper PPE for employees (gloves, masks, eye protection, etc.), defining the various types of PPE, and how to provide PPE to employees.
- OSHA requires that transit agencies provide gloves, masks, face shields, and other standard or pandemic required PPE to employees, at no cost to employees.
- Reminds employers to provide a standard operating procedure for employees regarding proper laundering, maintaining, and storing of PPE items.



Testing, Screening, and Reporting

- Provides outlines to develop screening and testing procedures for staff.
- While the CDPHE only states employers should consider screening transit employees when they report to work, State mandate requires all essential businesses and agencies take steps to implement symptom monitoring protocols for employees.
- Provides guidance for employees to self-screen before arriving to work and provides procedures for employees to leave work when experiencing symptoms.
- Suggests the implementation of a reporting system to track virus cases.



Social Distancing

- Details the recommendations from the CDPHE and the FTA regarding the physical separation of greater than six feet between transit operators and passengers.
- Recommendations include delineating areas at transit stops, staggering boarding and alighting, adding additional barriers between operators and passengers during ticketing, and maximizing seating distance while onboard transit vehicles.
- CDPHE has required that bus capacity be limited to ensure appropriate space between passengers.



Gives recommendations for engineering advances in four main categories:

- Vehicle Ventilation strategies - varying from running vehicle HVAC systems on non-circulation mode to upgrading the ventilation systems to include antimicrobial filtration.
- Passenger and Employee Barriers - both used to delineate the six foot distancing zones and to create a vapor barrier between bodies.
- Restrooms - recommendations of touchless devices, such as faucets, soap dispensers, and air dryers, as well as adding hand sanitization dispensers.
- No-Touch Fares - used to minimize any contact between operators and passengers.



Communications with Stakeholders

- Creates a communications standard for local agencies to follow, including dissemination details and communication strategies.
- Outlines ways to not only properly enforce pandemic protocols, but also to support the front line employees (primarily operators) who are tasked with enforcing the pandemic protocols.
- CDPHE has stated that transit agencies should communicate what can be expected of the public when riding transit—most importantly, to avoid public transportation when sick, and to rely on public transportation for essential trips only.
- Creates guidelines on enforcing the pandemic protocols, mainly focused on rider compliance.



Bus Operations

- Provides guidelines for immediate and future service development and modifications, including scheduling and route changes and changes in capacity limits.
- Provides guidelines for ridership monitoring and response to capacity limits.
- Provides guidelines for touchless ticketing and fare collection as well as fare adjustments.
- Suggests coordination with local transit providers to ensure similar safety methods are being met.



- Outlines the federal and state safety and health regulations that employers and transit agencies must follow.
- Summarizes the best practices for human resources during pandemic times.
- Creates a standard of best practices, covering workplace hazard assessments (recommending agencies take a proactive, ongoing approach to identifying and assessing hazards) as well as public health safeguards (creating guidelines to encourage employees to stay at home when sick, and creating guidelines to dictate when an employee can return to work).
- Reinforces all applicable employee protections, including protections under Title VI, the ADA, as well as FMLA policies, sick leave policies, and job protection policies.



Special Considerations

- Provides procedures for protection of front line employees in the sense of physical security, as well as protection for physical assets through additional security measures.
- Provides guidance for Continuous Emergency Management monitoring, to allow agencies to monitor the effectiveness of the current plans and reassess as needed.
- Provides funding guidance, outlining the different ways that agencies statewide can utilize funds from the CARES act and the FTA Emergency Relief Program.



Long Term Pandemic Protocol

- Overview - will contain a background, scope, and structure to the document. It will cover the importance of pandemic planning and reiterate key takeaways from the Short Term document.
- Planning - will cover the best practices for service restoration, and will also include solutions for emergency management monitoring. It will also include future considerations for human resources and communications.
- Technology and Engineering Controls - will detail options for long term oriented engineering which can be used to improve transit pandemic precautions.
- Partnerships - will include suggestions for creating and maintaining partnerships with local agencies, local governments, and micro mobility providers, in the interests of rebuilding or increasing ridership.



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